



## OFFICIAL COMMENT

Save Maumee Grassroots Organization

1901 Niagara Dr.

Fort Wayne, IN 46805

260.417.2500

[www.savemaumee.org](http://www.savemaumee.org)

LSA Document #08-764 (Antidegradation)

Mary Ann Stevens, Rules Development Branch

Office of Legal Counsel

Indiana Department of Environmental Management

100 North Senate Ave.

MC 65-41

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2251

Dear MaryAnn Stevens, Save Maumee would like this letter read at your public meeting  
RE: LSA Document #08-764 (Antidegradation)

This letter is coming from the largest and longest contributing stream to the Great Lakes in the United States, The Maumee River. The Maumee headwaters right here in Fort Wayne, IN. Our water here has many concerns. If you use the methods proposed in the draft rule, state regulators could permit multiple new low-level discharges of a pollutant that together have a significant cumulative impact on Lake Michigan's water quality, without any evidence that the additional pollution is justified. The rule does NOT go far enough to protect Lake Michigan from new or increased pollution and is inconsistent with federal requirements.

We feel Indiana's rule would trigger an antidegradation review only when a new or increased discharge would increase the level of a pollutant to the degree it poses a potentially "detrimental effect" on designated uses.

Waiting to review a pollutant until it reaches levels where it could potentially make the water undrinkable, unswimmable or harm aquatic life misses the whole point that this is meant to keep clean waters clean. Please protect it and enforce current laws that are in place for the health of the public.

\* The rule includes several unjustified exemptions, and excludes phosphorus, sediment and other key pollutants for which no thresholds exist from protective provisions -- even though these pollutants are known to harm water quality.

\* The rule exempts so-called "de minimis" -- or low-level -- new pollution discharges from a federal requirement that the new pollution is a necessary byproduct of important local economic or social benefit.

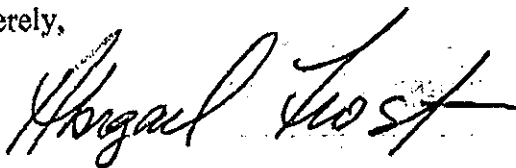
The Great Lakes Alliance is working with a coalition of groups in Indiana, including Save Maumee Grassroots Org., to strengthen the federally mandated rule, which sets a limit for how much new pollution can be discharged to Lake Michigan and other waterways in the state.

The federal Clean Water Act requires states to update their water quality standards at least every three years, and to develop and adopt statewide antidegradation policies for water quality standards. Ours have not been updated since the early 90's.

Indiana's rules are being debated against the backdrop of the public outcry that followed the state's issuance of a wastewater permit in 2007 that would have allowed British Petroleum's Whiting, Ind. refinery to increase its pollution discharge to Lake Michigan. The BP permit drew concern that Indiana's law doesn't do enough to protect water quality, and an independent review found the state's inconsistent antidegradation policies caused some of the confusion.

Indiana's current antidegradation requirements were developed under the Great Lakes Initiative of the 1990s and apply only to the Lake Michigan basin. PLEASE expand the protection!

Sincerely,



Abigail Frost  
Save Maumee Grassroots Org. Founder  
Master Naturalist  
Watershed Expert